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The 1998 City Excellence

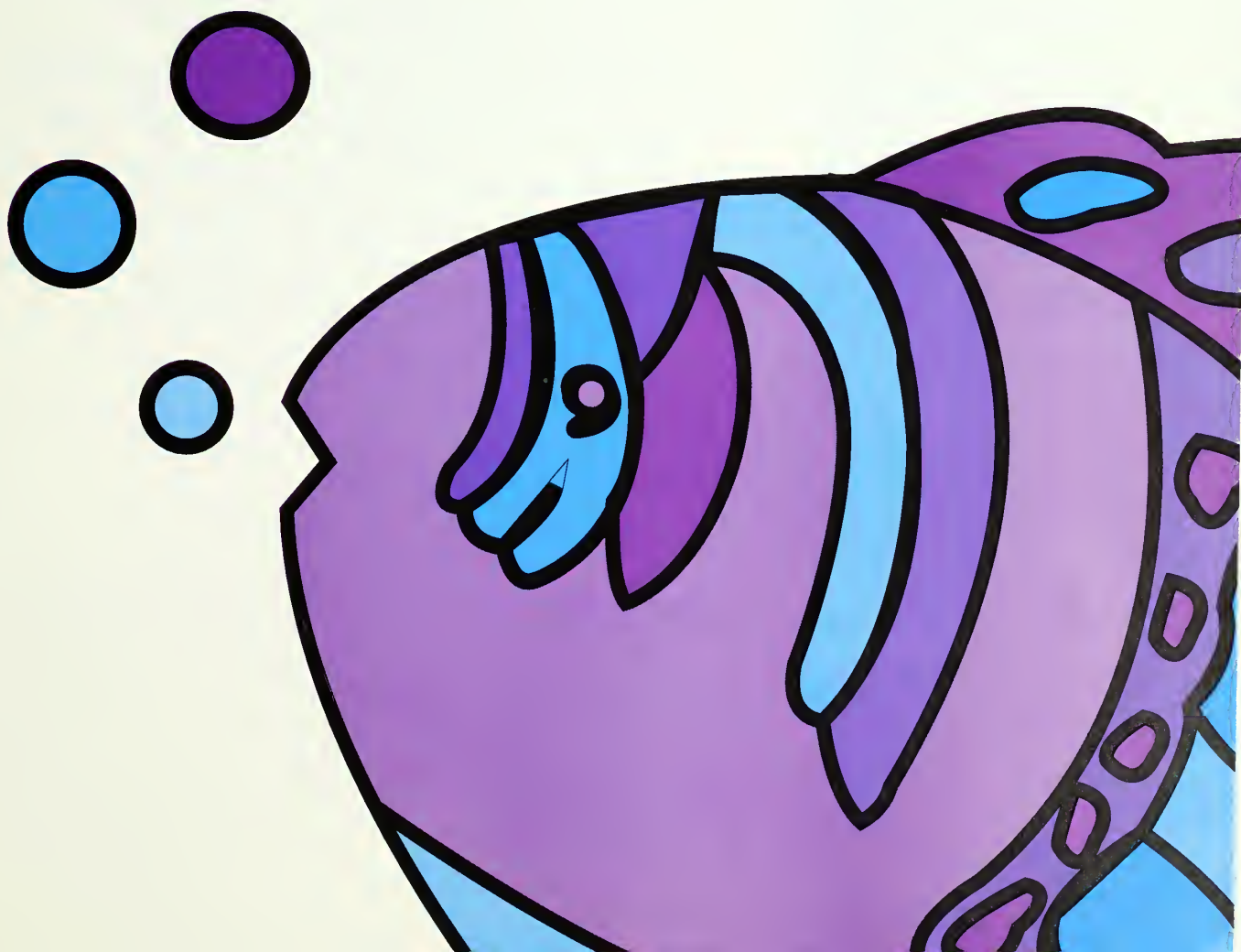
Awards

The Boston Management Consortium

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Immerse yourself in Excellence





It is my pleasure to honor the 1998 City Excellence Awards winning and finalist teams. The Awards celebrate the accomplishments of city of Boston employees who have improved city services through hard work and creative problem solving. While today we honor the winning and finalist teams, there are many, many teams who are striving to make a difference for the people of Boston. It is my pleasure to honor all of these teams for their significant contributions to making Boston a great place to live and work. Together we are improving the quality of life in Boston.

Mayor Thomas M. Menino

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Emcee

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Awards Project Manager

Adele Pollis, AP Associates

Director of Development

Valerie Sandberg

Director of Communications

Keith Westerman

Awards Interns

Honor Lydon and Jodie Edwards

All of us at WB56 wish to congratulate the 1998 City Excellence Awards winning and finalist teams for their outstanding accomplishments and significant contributions to the city of Boston.



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School of Government*

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*Senior Vice President,
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Labor Relations Coordinator, Boston Edison

About These Awards

The Boston Management Consortium established the City Excellence Awards in 1989 to encourage learning, creativity and collaboration within city government to better serve the public. Over 70 teams were nominated for the 1998 City Excellence Awards. A screening committee selected twelve finalists from among many qualified applicants within six award categories. The finalists made presentations before a judging panel, which selected the six winning teams.

We all know that there are many issues facing a city of Boston's size and stature. We often look to city government to address all of these issues, yet we know the Mayor and other officials cannot address them alone. Finding solutions requires partnerships—partnerships between city departments, community agencies, businesses, academia and Boston residents—so that innovative, effective approaches may be developed.

The stories of this year's winning teams and finalists remind us of what we can accomplish when we work together. Team members were not discouraged by the enormity of the tasks confronting them. They have done difficult jobs well by employing innovative approaches and developing real, workable solutions. We salute the 1998 City Excellence Awards winning teams and finalists for their spirit and dedication and for showing us the best that Boston has to offer!

Managing for Safer Neighborhoods Award

"As a society, we have been slow to recognize the harm suffered by children who witness violence in their everyday lives. It is gratifying to see a group of health care professionals and police officers addressing the issue with sensitivity and resolve. Bell Atlantic congratulates the dedicated members of the Child Witness to Violence Project for the difference they make in the lives of the children they serve."

Robert Mudge, Vice President, Massachusetts, Bell Atlantic-New England



Winner

Child Witness to Violence Project
Boston Police Department and
Boston Medical Center

Learning

- Participants attend presentations about the psychological effects of violence on children who witness it.
- Police officers improve skills in child interviewing techniques and assessing the need for intervention and referral.
- Social workers and health care professionals are taught about law enforcement procedures and the police role in violence prevention.
- Team members from both sides – police officers and health care providers – learn to reevaluate their perceptions of one another.
- The program increases awareness of ethnic and cultural differences that may affect a team member's ability to intervene effectively.

Outcomes

- Officers participating in the program feel better equipped to intervene on behalf of children who witness violence, and envision for themselves a broader role in managing domestic violence situations.
- Since their involvement in the seminar, 78 percent of participating officers say they have made referrals to health care professionals. Fully 95 percent report that the seminars affected the way they perform their jobs.



When, under the umbrella of the innovative Child Witness to Violence Project, social workers from the Boston Medical Center's Department of Pediatrics began consulting with representatives of the Boston Police Department, neither group perceived the other as a natural ally. But as they exchanged perspectives on the enduring harm suffered by children exposed to violence, both realized they had uncovered a deep well of common concern. For successfully building an effective collaboration between these two disparate cultures, the Child Witness to Violence Project is honored with this year's Bell Atlantic Managing for Safer Neighborhoods Award.

The community's stake in the team's success is high: A troubling survey of children in the pediatric clinic at Boston Medical Center revealed that ten percent had witnessed either a stabbing or shooting by age six. Without intervention, young children who witness violence are at heightened risk for school failure, socialization problems, stress-related disorders and violent behavior in later life.

Referral and Intervention

The main component of the team's strategy is early, decisive action. Frequently first on the scene of a violent incident, police are in a unique position to assess the need for intervention. If the officer elects to refer the child for further evaluation, the team's mental health clinicians are available for immediate response and comprehensive intervention. In one case, police charged a man with assaulting his wife in front of her two children. The arresting officer, who had participated in the Child Witness to Violence Project, referred the family to the team's counseling staff. The staff was able to reassure the children, who were suffering recurrent nightmares, and restore a measure of stability to the family.

"There is a tremendous amount of important learning taking place through this project, learning that translates into meaningful intervention on behalf of children exposed to violence," said Boston Police Department Commissioner Paul Evans.

Envisioning a Broader Role

Team-led seminars have drawn on the broad-ranging expertise of social workers and psychologists, medical residents and pediatric specialists. They have trained sergeants, community service officers, police academy

A Commitment to Boston's Children

staff and the district's Vietnamese community relations specialist. The learning is reciprocal: team leaders review trauma assessment and child interviewing skills with the police officers, who in turn discuss police intervention practices and domestic violence laws.

As a result of the training, many police officers say they take a more active role in administering to children who witness violence. One officer said he habitually approached domestic violence situations with a single, narrow imperative: remove the children from the room. "We just wanted to get them out of the line of fire," says patrolman Paul Johnston, a member of

District 11's Community Service Office. Johnston says he now recognizes that, for many young bystanders to violence, the victimization is just beginning. Seminar leaders caution the officers to treat young children with extreme sensitivity and carefully evaluate the need for outside intervention. Said one officer, "Now, when I respond, I don't just assess the parents' needs. I do a three pronged-assessment: the father, the mother and the children."

Face-to-face meetings with police officials have also helped the program's pediatric social workers shed the unhelpful stereotypes they say may have hampered cooperation with law enforcement in the past. Police officers agree. "At first we weren't sure if they appreciated what our job entailed," said one, comparing the initial misapprehension to "sumo wrestlers meeting 60's flower children."

But those doubts have given way to a deeply meaningful and productive partnership. "We've learned a new appreciation and respect for the role of police officers," said Program Director Betsy McAlister Groves, LICSW. "We are able to work together in a much more sophisticated way."

"It may seem like an unlikely collaboration, but in fact it's perfectly natural," she says. "This is not rocket science. It can be replicated. Eventually, there will be a similar program in every county in the state."

Neighborhood Pride Award

"Nothing says more about a neighborhood's commitment to its young people than the quality and condition of its schools. By involving communities in the revitalization of their schoolyards, the Boston Schoolyard Initiative unifies parents, educators and students behind a most worthwhile mission – to instill a sense of pride in our schools and create new, exciting ways for our children to learn. American Express Foundation, on behalf of American Express Financial Advisors, American Express TRS and American Express Bank is proud to sponsor this year's Neighborhood Pride Award."

Sam Samsel, Senior Vice President, American Express Financial Advisors



Winner

The Boston Schoolyard Initiative
Department of Neighborhood Development,
Boston Public Schools, Parks and Recreation
Department, Office of Budget Management, City
Trust Office, Basic City Services and Fund for
Boston Schoolyards

Learning

- The team versed itself in the "community design process," enabling it to guide schoolyard projects through their design and development phases while allowing schools and neighborhoods to retain decision-making authority.
- The team addresses issues raised at quarterly workshops and other regular meetings that assist the efforts of schoolyard committees.
- Landscape architects met with students, teacher and neighborhood residents on topics such as landscape and design, schoolyard safety and play equipment.
- The team learned to coordinate and combine the efforts of private and public sector partners.

Outcomes

- Through the initiative, communities, schools, parents, residents and government agencies across the city are working together to beautify and revitalize schoolyards.
- Nine schoolyards will be complete by the end of the 1998 school term, and seven are entering construction shortly.
- Fourteen schoolyards are under design; ten others will enter the planning stage shortly.

**AMERICAN
EXPRESS**

Schoolyards are places for children to run and play, jump rope and shoot baskets. But beyond mere utilitarian value, schoolyards are deeply symbolic of a neighborhood's commitment to educating and providing for its young people. A desolate or underutilized schoolyard signals to the community – and to its own students – that schools are inhospitable places unworthy of care and revitalization.

The Boston Schoolyard Initiative was established in 1995 on the unanimous recommendation of a task force appointed by Mayor Thomas Menino. Today, thirty schoolyards across Boston are being renovated and beautified, and ten more are in planning and design stages. "We applied for this particular award," said Project Manager Janet Fishstein, "because this really does restore pride to communities." The awards committee agrees: the Boston Schoolyard Initiative is recipient of this year's Neighborhood Pride Award, sponsored by American Express.

Creating "Community Centers"

The initiative embraces a bold model, gaining favor among neighborhood advocates across the country, of the schoolyard as a literal "community center" – a place where children can safely learn and play, and from which a community can derive a sense of pride and unity. As such, the Boston Schoolyard Initiative reaches out to parents, teachers, students, neighborhood residents and organizations, local business and corporate sponsors. In a large city where children do not always attend school in their own neighborhoods, the initiative has drawn communities and schools together in dramatic fashion and rallied them to a common purpose.

"The program is bringing people into the process of revitalizing their schools in a way they haven't before," says Fishstein. "It's entirely neighborhood-driven and school-driven."

The program has been successful, in part, because the team has learned to manage a "community design process" that emphasizes "how-to-do" over "how-to-build." In other words, participants are given leave to design a schoolyard that reflects the individual needs of the school and its neighborhood. "This is not a cookie-cutter process," says Fishstein. "Each

Reviving Schoolyards and Reuniting Communities

community – individuals and schools and private sector partners – has embraced a much more open-minded process."

The opinions of parents and the school-children themselves were welcomed into the renovation process. Landscape architects, hired to render design services and conduct workshops, actually entered classrooms and solicited ideas from the children. At the William H. Trotter School in Dorchester, 90 percent of the suggestions provided by students were integrated into the final plans

for the playground. Parents too, were closely involved in many phases of the Trotter schoolyard's planning and design process.

"This program is an excellent example of communities rallying behind their schools. It's impossible to overstate the positive difference this program makes in the lives of Boston's youth," says Chief of Basic City Services Michael J. Galvin. "The outside of a school should reflect the important work going on within its walls. The Boston Schoolyards Initiative brings that goal closer to reality."

Coordination and Compromise

A continuing challenge for project organizers is to remain open-minded to the community's "wish-list," yet mindful of the legal and administrative requirements of a publicly-funded initiative. Private and public sector team members meet frequently to discuss the status of projects and guard against problems that conceivably could jeopardize their capital funding. The team has also learned to stretch funding dollars by incorporating private contributions into their public contracts – by allowing, for example, an individual to donate a bench or piece of play equipment.

As with any multifaceted project of such scope, differences of opinion are inevitable. Positions often vary widely, and the team has increasingly learned to resolve internal dissent through compromise and mediation.

"Truthfully, there is tons of conflict," says Fishstein. "But by encouraging people to come forward with new ideas and remain open-minded, I think that those differences actually enhanced the process."

Leadership Award

"Anyone who has walked or driven down Washington Street can appreciate its tremendous presence and potential. BankBoston is proud to sponsor this year's Leadership Award and to honor its recipient, the Washington Street Task Force. It has demonstrated vision and determination, helping to secure a bright future for one of Boston's most distinguished streets."

Ira A. Jackson, Executive Vice President, BankBoston



Winner

Washington Street Task Force

Boston Redevelopment Authority, Mayor's Office of Business Services, Department of Neighborhood Development, Boston Transportation Department, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services, Boston Parks and Recreation Department, Boston Landmark Commission, South End Landmark Commission District, The Menino Project, Office of Cultural Affairs, Boston Main Streets and Enhanced Enterprise Community – Boston Empowerment Center.

Learning

- Team leaders learned to function as mediators, bringing a sense of balance and unity to task force meetings.
- The task force overcame conflicts and competing interests that threatened the success of the initiative, fashioning a truly collaborative effort that yielded its final proposal and recommendation.

Outcomes

- The creation of a large-scale proposal, presented to Mayor Thomas Menino last year, articulating specific recommendations for the revitalization of the Washington Street corridor.
- The investment of \$165 million, including housing and retail stores, street reconstruction and redesign, and a final commitment to the "Silver Line" transit project connecting Dudley Square to downtown Boston.
- Investment in the preservation and rehabilitation of several historic buildings.
- The inclusion of a stretch of Washington Street in the "Main Streets" program, a partnership between the city and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Wending through Chinatown, the South End, Roxbury, Jamaica Plain and Roslindale, Washington Street is the common thread in a patchwork of ethnically and economically diverse Boston neighborhoods. However, this historic gateway to downtown Boston has suffered decades of private and public disinvestment. In 1996, a group of local community, business and government leaders launched an aggressive program aimed at revitalizing the Washington Street corridor. The Washington Street Task Force, recipient of this year's BankBoston Leadership Award, has taken significant strides toward reversing years of neglect and restoring the luster to one of Boston's grandest boulevards.

An Unprecedented Collaboration

Clearly, the task force could not return recommendations to the mayor until it reached consensus within its ranks. The team comprised a wide range of interests, however, and some of them – notably, local resident and business leaders – had clashed in the past. The foremost challenge facing task force leaders, therefore, was to mediate among competing parties and diverging agendas.

The key, according to Project Director James Kostaras, was encouraging team members to abandon “positions” – which have a quality of permanence – and focus instead on common interests. Meetings gave way to brainstorming sessions. Through effective mediation, team members learned to de-emphasize turf battles and maintain a persistent focus on their common goals. “It was collective leadership at its best,” says Kostaras.

As a large-scale community planning project, the Washington Street initiative required the active participation of City Hall. Just as team members mitigated

potential conflicts among local community leaders, they also recognized the need to smooth the political tensions endemic among city agencies. As such, the project was purposefully cast as an administration initiative, and did not bear the stamp of any individual city department.

The task force also resolved a tenuous dispute that for 12 years had disrupted plans to construct public transit service along Washington Street. The long-awaited Silver Line project, an electric bus line linking Dudley Square to downtown Boston, will begin work by the spring of 1999.

“The accomplishments of this task force

Reviving a Grand and Historic Boulevard

are truly inspiring, said Chief Economic Development Officer Thomas O'Brien. “They have undertaken a difficult project and, within a relatively short time, moved it dramatically forward.”

The efforts of the task force yielded a collaboration among government, business and residential leaders that Kostaras calls “unprecedented.” The fruits of that collaboration are evident in the final report and recommendations presented to the mayor last year by task force Chair Randi Lathrop. The proposal envisions a tree-lined boulevard that captures the “important architectural, social and cultural history of the area.” It articulates a sweeping vision of a revitalized Washington Street as one of Boston's premier commercial,

residential and recreational attractions. Says Lathrop, “What we have presented is less a ‘plan’ than an ‘implementation.’ This is ongoing. It is entirely result-oriented, a template for future action.”

\$165 Million in New Investment

The task force also researched the needs of Washington Street businesses and residents, soliciting their input and garnering their support. They met with experts on urban revitalization, and secured access to financing for area businesses through local banks and lenders. And most important, they moved forward a process that, despite years of well-intended efforts, had lain dormant for what seemed an eternity.

“Other groups had studied and studied and studied,” said one prominent community leader. “Finally, this one came forward and said, ‘We’re not going to just study anymore. We’re going to do something.’”

And it has. “The results of the task force's efforts are evident,” says Kostaras. “There is \$165 million of new investment in housing, neighborhood stores, a community health center and a new public transit line along Washington Street. Things are definitely moving forward.”

Customer Service Award

"Liberty Mutual Group applauds members of the Elderly and Disabled Housing Division and their efforts to bring quality low-income housing to Boston. Through an ambitious program of comprehensive reform, the division has dramatically improved the condition of its buildings and the delivery of services to its residents. This group of dedicated city employees exemplifies the spirit of excellence in customer service, and is amply deserving of this award."

Richard A. Dapra,
Vice President and Manager,
Human Resource
Development,
Liberty Mutual Group



Winner

Elderly and Disabled Housing Division
Boston Housing Authority

Learning

- All managers participate in training courses designed to enhance their job knowledge and improve their skills. Managers are taught to embrace a more comprehensive vision of property management.
- Newly-hired managers undergo six months of intensive training, both on site and in classrooms.
- Maintenance staff receives formal training within and outside their areas of specialization
- Team staffers meet regularly to discuss their jobs and ways to improve the delivery of service to residents.
- The team has acquired skills in the collection and analysis of data.

Outcomes

- The team reduced turnaround on non-emergency maintenance requests by almost 90 percent.
- Vacancies have been reduced from 8 percent to less than 4 percent.
- Problems with the provision of heat and hot water during the winter have been virtually eliminated.
- More than 500 capital and operating budget improvements have been performed over the last three years.



In the summer of 1994, a disappointed Mayor Thomas Menino decried the city's inability to deliver quality housing to its elderly and disabled residents. Many buildings languished in an almost perpetual state of disrepair. Basic utilities were often unreliable, security and maintenance were spotty, and employee morale was low. Most troubling, residents felt abandoned by the Boston Housing Authority and seriously questioned the city's commitment to improving their living conditions.

In one of his first directives as mayor, Menino instructed the BHA to correct immediately the most egregious violations. He also appointed a task force, whose recommendations were codified in a Strategic Management Plan. The Elderly and Disabled Housing Division team has brought those recommendations to life, dramatically improving conditions in the housing developments under its management over the past three years. The team's efforts have earned it the Liberty Mutual Group's Customer Service Award for 1998.

A Mandate for Fundamental Reform

Faced with systemic problems in its delivery of quality housing to its residents, the team quickly recognized the need for fundamental organizational reform. In a series of gradual but decisive steps, it shifted authority for each housing development away from the BHA's central organization and into the hands of the individual property managers. With enhanced autonomy, the managers are now much better equipped to ensure the smooth functioning of the developments they oversee. And when problems do arise, residents enjoy more direct and meaningful access to responsive management.

From the earliest stages, the team also realized the need to wean its managers off the prevalent "task-by-task" approach to property management and toward a broader perspective based on accepted industry standards. All managers attended in-house training programs taught by their public and private sector colleagues. They learned how to draft management plans and to create written operating procedures. New managers, meanwhile, entered an intensive six-month training program that combined classroom and on-site learning.

Improving Housing for the Elderly and Disabled

Providing the Right Tools

Over the past three years, a new attitude has permeated all ranks of the Elderly and Disabled Housing Division, one that team manager Gwen Friend describes as "a sense that we can do what needs to be done." Behind the attitude shift, says Friend, was the team's determination to arm its staff with whatever expertise and equipment their jobs demanded.

"In the case of maintenance staff, this often involved giving them the right tools, and not just literally" says Friend. With a loosening of the restrictions that often

prevented cross-training, maintenance workers found themselves able to provide a wide variety of services that were once considered outside their skill area and off-limits. By exerting tighter control over the work being performed, managers have significantly reduced confusion and delivered more effective, timely service.

Home is Everything

"The hallmark of good property management is customer service," says Sandra Henriquez, BHA administrator. "The comfort, security and satisfaction of our residents is our most important priority." The success of the Elderly and Disabled Housing Division stems, in no small part, from its willingness to embrace Henriquez's customer service philosophy. And because the residents of these low-income developments constitute a particularly fragile community, the need for sensitivity and responsiveness is acute. Explains Gwen Friend, "Often, for the elderly or disabled, home is everything."

Service To Youth Award

"For 12 years, the Boston Youth Clean-Up Corps has made a remarkable difference in the lives of young people. In addition to providing meaningful summer opportunities for Boston's teens, they have made our city a far more inviting place to live and visit. Boston Edison, sponsor of this year's Service to Youth Award, believes that every Bostonian owes BYCC and its 'red-shirts' a debt of lasting gratitude."

**Alison Alden, Senior Vice
President of Sales and
Services and Human
Resources, Boston Edison**



Winner

Boston Youth Clean-Up Corps
Boston Parks and Recreation Department

Learning

- BYCC Team members learn to adapt to the demands posed by a large and rapidly growing jobs program
- Team leaders train in computer skills – maintaining, managing and updating a large, multi-level database.
- Teens are trained in first aid, wellness, violence prevention and a host of "real-life" coping skills.

Outcomes

- The BYCC program has grown tenfold since its inception, gainfully employing over 4,500 Boston youth last summer.
- Clean-up crews removed 958 tons of debris from lots and public properties, helping to beautify Boston neighborhoods.
- Thousands of teens provide a steady source of manpower to non-profit agencies throughout Boston.
- Teens receive valuable work experience that engenders discipline, pride and unity, and better equips them for a meaningful and productive futures.

Anyone who spends summers in Boston is long-accustomed to the sight of teenagers in red shirts removing trash from vacant lots and clearing overgrown vegetation from public property. Few realize, however, that a youth program whose work manifesto once amounted to "hand them a broom" has burgeoned into an immense, multifaceted jobs initiative that productively employs thousands of Boston teens every summer. The Boston Youth Clean-Up Corps (BYCC) and its "red-shirts" have earned laurels from President Bill Clinton, gratitude from the countless local organizations it serves each year, and the 1998 Service to Youth Award from corporate sponsor Boston Edison.

"No Questions Asked"

Since its inception in 1986, BYCC has espoused a firm "no questions asked" employment policy: register for a job and you get one. The policy represents an intentional and emphatic departure from an earlier era, when public sector jobs were reserved for teens with well-placed political connections. "We don't ask your race, your religion, or who your parents voted for in the last election" says BYCC Director Timothy McCarthy. "When you call, you immediately become a number and you get a job. Everyone is the same."

The program's popularity has forced McCarthy and his management team to adapt to a constantly expanding set of issues and imperatives. As the number of participants has grown, BYCC staff has not only enlarged its operation but broadened its scope and philosophy. The team has undergone training in trauma and crisis intervention, learning to recognize signs of drug or alcohol abuse before they escalate. BYCC workers of all ages now learn about wellness and first aid, self esteem and conflict resolution.

"It's impossible to overstate the positive difference this program makes in the lives of Boston's teens," says Chief of Basic City Services Michael J. Galvin. "Even as it numbers continue to grow, BYCC is there every summer, providing our young people with a constructive outlet for their energies and talents."

Managing the Logistics

Understandably, the logistics of providing jobs – not to mention bimonthly paychecks – for over 4,500 young people every summer is daunting. To manage the ground swell of applicants, the BYCC team established a full-

Instilling Pride and Purpose in Boston's Youth

service phone bank known as Hopeline. From its processing headquarters at the Reggie Lewis Center in Roxbury, Hopeline registers 30 young people every half hour over a typical June enrollment period. During those weeks, the permanent four-member BYCC team mushrooms into a staffing juggernaut larger than Boston's police and fire departments combined. Team members process each applicant's personal information, secure appropriate tax information and medical forms, and provide identification cards and work site assignments.

These days, however, BYCC red-shirts are just as likely to materialize alongside the

shark tank at the New England Aquarium as a vacant, trash-strewn lot downtown. While 2,000 red-shirts cleared nearly 958 tons of debris from Boston sites this year, thousands of others – through the BYCC's Community-Based Organizations (CBO) program – have taught children to sail and swim, conducted aquarium tours, created quilts, tutored math and read books to inner-city youth. The BYCC's 45-member Mural Crew, meanwhile, which paints collages on the sides of unsightly and defaced buildings, is so popular that last year's backlog alone represented twenty summer's worth of work.

CBO's enhance the local economy by providing a steady and reliable stream of teenage employees to local non-profit organizations that, in most cases, can ill-afford to pay competitive wages to adult workers. Equally important, the CBO and red-shirt programs provide a channel through which young people can develop the type of real-world employment skills that classrooms rarely teach. For youth from more disadvantaged neighborhoods, BYCC may offer the only meaningful alternative to the allure of the streets. "This program creates unity and pride," says McCarthy. "We get these kids on the right track. BYCC is a fantastic training ground for tomorrow's leaders."

Innovations in Education Award



Winner

Learning and Information Network for the Community (LINC) Technology Task Force
Boston Public Schools, Management and Information Services, Boston Redevelopment Authority, Office of the Chief Operating Officer, Office of Budget Management, Mayor's Office, Boston Public Library, Boston Community Centers, Private Industry Council and over 100 business partners.

Learning

- Learned to manage a vast project that involves 12 city departments and fundamentally affects the operation of 128 schools, 26 libraries and 41 community centers.
- Conducted weekly meetings to help prioritize efforts and facilitate communication among participants
- Forty members of the LINC team attended a planning retreat sponsored by the Boston Management Consortium that produced key support grants and valuable planning initiatives.

- Consulted with a variety of LINC's business partners on infrastructure design and public relations strategy.

Outcomes

- Developed, in conjunction with an outside consultant, LINC's comprehensive five-year technology plan. The foundation of the plan is a \$50 million commitment from Mayor Thomas M. Menino.
- Provided fast-track technological training to over 2,000 teachers in two years.
- Raised over \$26 million through private- and public-sector partnerships.
- Installed 7,000 networked computers throughout the school system. In two years, reduced ratio of students to computers from 63:1 to 10:1. Installed networks in 80 percent of all buildings and, on October 1, 1998, will become first major urban district with all schools networked.

"For educators, technology poses both tremendous challenges and unprecedented opportunities. By bringing twenty-first century technology into every classroom in the city, LINC is helping Boston's young people learn more and learn better. John Hancock, proud sponsor of the Innovations in Education Award, commends the LINC task force for improving education in our schools and preparing students to meet the ever-growing demands of a technological society."

Diane Capstaff,

Executive Vice President,

John Hancock

Financial Services



Underscoring his commitment to state-of-the-art technology for Boston's public schools, Mayor Thomas Menino has pledged one computer to every four students by the year 2001. That commitment is embodied in a five-year, \$125 million technology plan called LINC, Learning and Information Network for the Community. The plan is entrusted to the LINC Technology Task Force, whose efforts have earned it the 1998 Innovations in Education Award sponsored by John Hancock Financial Services. The team is successfully ushering the computer age into thousands of classrooms, community centers and libraries across Boston, preparing today's students for the technological challenges of tomorrow.

A Web of Partnerships

The scope of the LINC initiative is vast, and the task force has secured over \$26 million in support from a diverse web of public and private partners. The business community, including large technology companies such as 3Com, Microsoft and Intel, has donated more than \$13 million in money, time and resources over the past two years. The balance was raised through state and federal agencies, universities and foundations. Additionally, dozens of electricians – volunteers from I.B.E.W. Local 103 – contributed \$400,000 of free labor to the project by removing wiring from the walls of older schools.

Mayor Menino's commitment of \$50 million is the highest on a per capita basis of any large urban school district in the country. Moreover, according to task force member Edward DeMore, the team's achievements over the last two years have earned the confidence of its benefactors and enabled LINC to pile up an impressive fundraising portfolio. "Our hundred-plus partners have been tremendously generous," says DeMore, "and they are absolutely

integral to our success. But we continue to seek support. We have a long way to go."

A Large and Complex Project

Recognizing the breadth of LINC's mandate, the task force acquired extensive training in managing a large and complicated project. The original LINC plan itself, the blueprint for all subsequent task force activity, was developed through an arduous series of interviews and focus groups. Several of LINC's business partners offered consulting services, and the Boston Management Consortium sponsored a retreat that yielded a number of key support grants and private sector partnerships. Most notably, the program's success stems from the ability of

Preparing Schools for Tomorrow's Challenges

city staffers, educators, parents, and business partners to recognize and support a common vision, says task force leader Steven Gag.

Teaching Teachers

The LINC team faces one premier challenge: how to best integrate computer-based learning into existing curricula and introduce an older generation of educators to a sea of emerging technology. LINC team members were quick to recognize the impending need for teacher support and development, delivering "just-in-time" training to 2,000 educators through innovative workshops and specially designed "train-the-trainer" models. Their efforts have been received enthusiastically from teachers,

600 of whom recently attended – on their own time – a weekend technology forum. Over 1,500 others received summertime training through a LINC partnership with Harvard, M.I.T. and other local colleges. Computer maker HiQ is sponsoring a free teacher training center – the first of its kind in the nation – to be operational by the fall of 1998.

"The enthusiasm of our teachers and their willingness to embrace these new technologies are perhaps the best evidence of the LINC team's success," said Boston Public Schools Superintendent Thomas Payzant. "As a result, our students are more motivated and more actively engaged in learning."

Halfway through its five-year mission, LINC has left a measurable imprint. There are 7,000 new networked computers throughout the school system. Starter networks are up and running in 101 of the district's 128 schools, linking classrooms and administrative offices, computer labs and libraries. By October 1, 1998, Boston becomes the first major urban district in the nation to install networks in all its constituent schools. Most dramatically, LINC has reduced the ratio of students to computers from 63:1 two years ago to 10:1 today.

Those impressive statistics notwithstanding, LINC's ultimate objective – its only objective, according to Ann Grady, the director of Boston's Office of Instructional Technology – is improving performance in the classroom and preparing students for the world beyond. LINC task force members maintain a persistent focus on that goal, recognizing that technology is merely a tool – albeit a formidable one – with which young minds are sharpened. "The importance of technology," says Grady, "can only be measured by the difference it makes in the classroom. Are we helping kids learn? Are we better preparing them to enter the workforce? Nothing else matters."

Special Recognition Award



"Fleet Bank is proud to honor the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with this year's Special Recognition Award. With limited resources – and enormous determination – the EAP has expanded and improved its services and staff. Its efforts have brought peace of mind to many city employees, offering them a place to turn in times of personal difficulty."

John P. Hamill, President,
Fleet Bank of Massachusetts

By any measure, the achievements of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) over the last 16 months have been impressive. More city employees are now offered a broader range of counseling and referral services than ever before. But given the delicacy of the EAP's mission – and that it forged its successes within the constraints of tight resources – these advances are especially striking. For increasing its administrative and organizational efficiency, the EAP is honored with this year's Fleet Bank Special Recognition Award.

"It's critically important that city employees have a place to turn during difficult times," says Boston's Chief Operating Officer Dennis DiMarzio. "That place is the EAP. As such, it is an absolutely integral department, and deserves to be commended for its exemplary work."

The EAP provides counseling and referral to city employees who are struggling with personal problems, either at home or the workplace. Its mental health providers are educated and trained in areas that include alcohol and substance abuse, stress management, depression, grief counseling and elder care. Once staffed by paraprofessionals, the EAP now employs primarily Master's-level clinicians with backgrounds in psychology or social work.

In 1997, the EAP formed a committee to discuss employee wellness and improve

communication between agencies charged with employee oversight. As a result, the EAP designated a liaison to help coordinate employee services. Additionally, the department has developed new quality assurance mechanisms, protocols for handling incoming cases and orientations to inform city employees of the expanded services EAP now provides.

"There was a lot of inter-departmental cooperation," says Program Director Michael Kineavy. Integral to the EAP success was the support of Boston Mayor Thomas Menino and Vivian Leonard, the head of human resources for the city. "We're in a much better position to help many more people than we once were," says Kineavy.

The EAP has expanded its office space and secured newer resources and amenities. It has increased the size of its staff and aggressively marketed its services to city employees. What's more, these departmental improvements were achieved almost entirely within the EAP's existing budget. Brochures came from the city's Graphic Arts Department; staff was procured from other internal agencies.

"We started with many needs, weren't shy and knocked on a lot of doors," said Kineavy.

Finalists

Bell Atlantic Managing for Safer Neighborhoods Award

*Crime Analysis Meeting
Boston Police Department*

In 1996, the Boston Police Department instituted Crime Analysis Meetings (CAM). The CAM's objective was threefold: Increase accountability, provide a forum for detection and examination of crime trends, and encourage district and special unit commanders to share successful crime prevention strategies. On all three fronts, CAMs have exceeded expectations. "Geo-mapping" has sharpened the department's ability to isolate crime patterns and identify incipient trouble spots, exemplifying a broader vision of crime prevention.

Faced with heightened expectations, detectives and supervisors are more carefully scrutinizing crime data and generating more valuable prevention strategies. Most notably, an institutional reluctance to share ideas has given way to broad-based cooperation among district personnel and specialized unit personnel. Due in large part to the success of the CAM initiative, serious crime in Boston has dropped to its lowest level in 30 years.

American Express Neighborhood Pride Award

*"Wipe It Clean"
Property Management Department*

Since the inception of "Wipe It Clean," Boston's systematic approach to urban graffiti removal has become a national model. Graffiti is a blight on city neighborhoods, promoting gang-related activity and eroding civic pride. Realizing that graffiti "tags" are often motivated by a need for recognition, "Wipe It Clean" instituted a policy of rapid response and removal that sharply discouraged repeat offense. Early beneficiaries of this policy, including Boston's Mission Hill and Fenway neighborhoods, saw a dramatic and lasting decline in graffiti vandalism. The city also developed a waiver method that allocated public funds to graffiti removal on private property.

The city equipped a special van with a 500-gallon water tank, freeing workers from reliance on external water sources. Through cooperation with other municipalities, fellow agencies and private graffiti removal firms, "Wipe It Clean" members have developed an unprecedented level of technical expertise. Almost weekly, the team receives requests for demonstrations and technical consultation from throughout the Commonwealth and beyond.

BankBoston Leadership Award

*Price Equity Initiative
Weights and Measures Division,
Inspectional Services Department*

In 1996, a survey conducted by the newly-formed Price Equity Initiative revealed an alarming 22.5 percent error rate among area businesses using electronic price "scanners" at their checkout counters. Spurred by a mandate from the state legislature and a stringent set of federal standards, the price equity team has reduced the error rate to 3.2 percent. By developing expertise in new pricing technologies and a keen perspective on the marketplace, the team was able to develop a long-term program whose efficiency exceeds that of most U.S. cities.

However, the team's commitment to pricing accuracy extends well beyond mere enforcement. It invites store management into the process, helping them develop innovative solutions and institute important policy changes. Its efforts have led to higher vigilance among Boston retailers, encouraging them to look upon pricing accuracy and fairness as an indispensable business priority.

Liberty Mutual Group Customer Service Award

*Boston Common Frog Pond
Boston Parks and Recreation Department*

The Boston Common Frog Pond team successfully rescued a barren corner of the historic Boston Common from years of indifference and neglect, creating in its place a thriving attraction for residents and tourists and an incentive for economic development in the heart of the city. Recognizing the implicit challenges of undertaking a high-visibility project within a historic preservation district, the team entered into a valuable partnership with Boston's private sector that tapped the expertise of local design and management professionals.

Boston Mayor Thomas Menino set an accelerated 18-month deadline for the project, prompting an unusually high level of cross-disciplinary learning and training among team members. The renovated Frog Pond now includes a 16,000 square-foot outdoor ice rink that draws 7,400 skaters weekly, transforming in warmer months into a reflecting pool and 70-foot high fountain. By proposing and implementing a nominal skating fee for adults that pays for the Frog Pond's off-season upkeep, the team has created a self-sustaining, year-round facility.

Boston Edison Service To Youth Award

*Mayor's Youth Council
Boston Community Centers, Mayor's Office*

Established in 1994, the Mayor's Youth Council provides volunteer high school students with an active role in addressing youth issues. Through skill building workshops sponsored by a partnership among the city of Boston, Northeastern University and the Boston Bar Association, the Youth Council encourages teens to gain leadership skills and self confidence while they reach out to their peers and work with adult decision makers. The council members hold neighborhood meetings that provide teens with information about opportunities for youth in Boston, as well as the chance to voice their concerns and develop positive solutions that are shared at bimonthly council meetings with Mayor Menino.

Council members participate in a wide assortment of programs and events, ranging from facilitating workshops on high school curriculum to advocating to federal officials for summer jobs and after school programs. Throughout the year, the council members participate in activities including neighborhood community service projects, a citywide peer leadership dance, a youth forum at Northeastern University and the April Youth Summit for 1,500 Boston teens. The Council also founded the Mayor's Youthline, a telephone resource line staffed by teen "listeners" who provide a broad range of information about youth programs utilizing a computer/mapping database. The Youthline fielded 11,000 phone calls during the last 18 months, connecting young people, parents, teachers and coaches with youth opportunities.

John Hancock Financial Services Innovations in Education Award

*Breast Friends Program
Boston Public Health Commission*

Through a unique model of preventative care, the Breast Friends Program provides a safe and nurturing environment in which women, particularly African Americans, can learn about early detection of breast cancer and openly discuss related health issues. The program sponsors "Breast Friend Parties" in neighborhood homes, churches, schools and health centers throughout Boston. The parties are led by volunteer "patient ambassadors," women drawn from the community and trained in early detection methods such as self-exams, clinical exams and mammography.

These leaders attend conferences and symposiums, learning about the obstacles to early detection that commonly face minority communities and contribute to the disproportionately high death rate among black cancer victims – fear, language barriers, lack of insurance, and poor access to transportation and child care. By providing taxi vouchers for mammogram appointments, translators, escorts and stipends for babysitters, Breast Friends helps women receive the type of preventative care that is fundamental to early cancer detection.

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Robert T. Markel
Executive Director

August 13, 1998

Dear City Manager:

I am pleased to send you the Boston Management Consortium's 1998 City Excellence Awards booklet. I hope that you were able to attend the awards ceremony on June 25th. It was a wonderful celebration – many guests have told us that it was our best ever! Host Karen Marinella and guest speaker Mayor Thomas M. Menino were among the over 300 guests who enjoyed the festivities at The New England Aquarium.

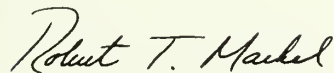
The Consortium began the City Excellence Awards in 1989 to encourage learning, growth, creativity and innovation among city employees. Since its inception, over 500 teams of city employees have participated in the awards program, demonstrating an outstanding capacity for addressing some of the key urban issues facing the city of Boston. Thanks to their efforts, the delivery of services within the areas of public safety, education, health and human services and basic city services has continually been improved upon, making Boston a better place to live and work for all of us.

Each of this year's winning teams illustrates what can be accomplished when people work together to address key issues impacting our city. Finding solutions to these issues requires partnerships – partnerships between city departments, community agencies, businesses, academia and Boston residents – so that effective, innovative approaches may be developed.

I hope that you will enjoy reading about the accomplishments of this year's winning and finalist teams in the enclosed awards booklet. Each of these teams demonstrates a commitment to the principles embodied in the mission of the Boston Management Consortium by using learning, creativity and collaboration to better serve the public.

Please contact me if you would like to find out more about the Boston Management Consortium and how we may be of assistance to your department. I look forward to serving you throughout the year and hope you enjoy reading about the accomplishments of this year's winning and finalist teams

Sincerely,



Robert T. Markel
Executive Director

Honorable Mentions

Bell Atlantic Managing for Safer Neighborhoods Award

Boston Animal Control
Property Management

Boston EMS Bicycle Operations Team
Emergency Medical Services

Code Enforcement Team
Department of Neighborhood Development

Community Task Force on Homelessness
Boston Police Department

Drug Control Division
Boston Police Department

HEAT
Inspectional Services Department

Operation Sound Off/Hispanic Community Meeting
Boston Police Department

Operation Sweet Tooth
Boston Police Department

Proactive Warrant Service
Boston Police Department

American Express Neighborhood Pride Award

Auto-Related Business Project
Inspectional Services Department

Eagle Hill Heritage Neighborhood Program
Boston Landmarks Commission and the Environment Department

East Boston /Healthy Boston Coalition
Office of Health and Human Services

Neighborhood Crime Watch Unit
Boston Police Department

Project Environmental Justice for Egleston
Boston Public Schools

BankBoston Leadership Award

City of Boston Employee Substance Abuse Awareness Training Group
Boston Public Health Commission

Gardner Extended Services School
Boston Public Schools

The Harcourt General Foundation Resident Teacher Program
Boston Public Schools

Surface Transportation Action Forum (STAF)
Boston Transportation Department, Boston Redevelopment Authority, Public Works Department and Parks and Recreation Department

Liberty Mutual Customer Service Award

Boston Empowerment Center
Department of Neighborhood Development, Office of Human Services and Boston Redevelopment Authority

The Boston Home Center
Department of Neighborhood Development

BPS Customer Survey
Boston Public Schools

Contract Forms & Procurement Information Group
Auditing and Law Departments

Early Retirement Incentive (E.R.I.) Project
Boston Retirement Board

Fiscal Year Revaluation Plan
Assessing Department

HIV Dental Ombudsperson Program
Public Health Commission

The Public Service Unit
Boston Police Department

Boston Edison Service to Youth Award

Boston Police Department /Greater Boston YMCA Program
Boston Police Department

Channing/UPS Mentorship Program
Boston Public Schools

Fenway MCHS/Children's Hospital Collaborative
Boston Public Schools

Junior Police Academy
Boston Police Department

Student Support Team Model
Boston Public Schools

Trotter Elementary School Afterschool Program
Boston Public Schools

Youth & Student Athlete Program
Boston Police Department

John Hancock Innovations in Education Award

The Boston Reading Partners Program
Jobs and Community Service, Boston Redevelopment Authority

Cluster 3 Team
Boston Public Schools

Cluster 5 Literacy Team
Boston Public Schools

The Connections Program
Boston Public Schools

F.A.C.T.S. Program
Boston Public Schools

G.R.E.A.T. Cooking Class
Boston Police Department

MAGIC ME/Boston, Inc. Partnership
Boston Public Schools

Net Navigators Program
Boston Public Library

Space Needs Task Force
Boston Public Schools and Department of Neighborhood Development

Teacher Inquiry Grant Program
Boston Public Schools

Whole School Change Through Literacy
Boston Public Schools

The Boston Management Consortium

A Partnership Between the City of Boston and...

Partners for a Better Boston

The Boston Management Consortium is a public-private partnership that provides the best of Boston's trainers, consultants, and problem solvers to help City government to work more efficiently and find creative solutions to key urban issues.

Leaders

American Express
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Bell Atlantic
The Boston Foundation
Boston Edison
Fidelity Foundation
Harvard/Pilgrim Health Care
John Hancock Financial Services
Liberty Mutual Group

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MANAGEMENT
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Robert Markel

Executive Director,
Boston Management Consortium

For more information contact:
Boston Management Consortium
43 Hawkins Street, Boston, MA 02114
617-635-3372; Fax 617-635-3568